

# GFESS Parent Council Minutes

**Meeting date:** September 18, 2023

**Meeting time:** start time: 6:30pm

**Location:** Library

Attendance: Heidi, Stacey-Lynn, Lindsay, Lisa, Hailey, Doug, Robyn, Kristyn, Susan, John, Carrie, Fred and Roxanne

## 1. Student Council Report presented by *Hailey Hudson (student rep)*

### a. Peer Mentoring Program

- Called "Gryphon Guides."
- Orientation week went well. The mentors planned a tour, games, and lots of activities for the students.
- Field trip for all mentors and mentees to Balls Falls on September 20.
- Already a huge improvement in grade 9 confidence and participation, especially co-curricular activities

### b. Student Council

- Candy Guessing Game happened the first week of school. There was lots of excitement and participation in all grades.
- Colour Wars will be happening every month (first on Sept.22). The last day of every month except Sept. Colour Wars is a friendly competition between the grades. The colours of the grades move with the students. Grade 9 students are blue. Grade 12 students have donated some of their blue attire for this year's grade 9 students.
- Gryphon Gear Days will happen one Wednesday a month

### c. Others

- Terry Fox Run on Sept. 15. Students walked on the track, able to purchase ribbons and cookies. All proceeds went to the Terry Fox Foundation.
- Krispy Kreme Fundraiser, hopefully at the end of September or Early October.
- Picture Day Sept. 21
- Honouring Orange Shirt Day on Sept. 29
- DSBN Student Senate application was due Sept. 13

## 2. Teacher's Report presented by *Doug. (Teacher)*

### a. New policies

- Signs have been placed in all classrooms saying "no phones allowed". This has helped teachers enforce the rule without facing backlash from students.
- Students are not permitted to use the restroom for the first and last fifteen minutes of class, and only one student can leave at a time. If a student is late, no washroom break is granted. Exceptions are allowed.

**b. Progress Report**

- Progress reports will be emailed to students October 5th. Parent-teacher conferences will be held on October 12<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.
- Parents or guardians will be contacted soon if their child isn't doing well.

**c. Extra Homework Help**

- Extra help is now available after school and during MSIP.
- Science help is Thursday, Math help is on Wednesday, and English help is TBD.

**3. Principal's Report presented by Fred L. (Principal)**

**d. School Climate/Tone**

- Staff members have volunteered to spend a bit of their time supervising hallways and bathrooms. This is helping the flow of students and demonstrating a presence in the school during transitions from classes. The number of students permitted to use the restrooms is being restricted by staff.
- DSBN is piloting a "Hall Mentor" to assist with hallway safety.
- New, for three now, vaping policy: students vaping must be 20 meters from school property.

**e. Grade Assemblies**

- At this time, there has been a major focus on the grade 9 students and helping with the transition from elementary school to high school. This has been done in collaboration with the Student Council and Gryhones Guides.
- Grade assemblies will begin tomorrow. This is an opportunity to review expectations, introduce new staff (e.g., Hall Mentor) and support systems for students.

**f. Safe School Pilot**

- GFESS has been selected to pilot a new initiative to scan pads. All staff will have a photo ID scan card to get into the school between 7am-5pm.
- During the morning and afternoon buses, as well as during lunch, the school will be open to all students. For the remainder of the day, all doors will be locked. Anyone coming into the building will need to buzz the main office. The secretaries will be responsible for allowing people into the building.
- Once the required scan cards and additional scan pad are in place, we will move to this pilot. At this time more details will be shared with families.

**g. Portables and Bleachers**

- GFESS has three new individual portables. Two are currently being worked on and the third will be arriving this week.
- GFESS will be getting another set of bleachers by the end of the month. This will help with crowd control during games. This new set of bleachers will have storage underneath.

**h. New Staff and Enrollment**

- GFESS welcomes 14 new teachers, 1 new EA, and 1 new Food Technician.
- The current enrollment is 1078. The first semester is always higher than the second semester. GFESS was better prepared to accommodate students coming from another board as a result of the in-person open house. August registration went smoothly.

**i. Breakfast Club**

- Started last week and open to all students.
- Through grants, donations and school support, the breakfast club cost app. \$20 000.00 per year.

**j. GFESS TV**

- Starting early October. All announcements will be read by students and viewed on the TVs. Parents or guardians can access announcements through social media platforms.

**4. Chair's Report presented by Heidi. (President)**

**k. Guest Speaker Ideas**

- Signs/Symptoms of Drug use in teens
- Mental Health strategies for parents and students
- Financial Aid (OSAP) for senior students and their parents/guardians.

**l. College/University Fairs**

- Colleges' Fair - October 18-19th, 2023 @Enercare Centre in Toronto
- Universities Fair - October 21-22nd, 2023 @ the Metro Toronto Convention Centre
- Ontario Universities Regional Fairs - November 9 10am-5pm in St. Catharines
- No regional college fair date set TBD.

**m. PIC**

- Conference @ Eden Secondary School on November 1 - register online
- DSBN staff facilitating the sessions.

**Meeting ended at : 7:54pm.**

**Next meeting: October 16th at 6:30pm**